



Care outside usual office hours

The National Physician Survey (NPS) asked family physicians what arrangements they had for care of their patients outside usual office hours. The questionnaire did not stipulate whether available physicians were respondents themselves, other physicians associated with their practices, or another physician altogether. Options on the questionnaire included a physician available, individualized medical telephone advice, instructions to go to the emergency department, instructions to go to a walk-in clinic or after-hours clinic, instructions to call a housecall service, other, and no direction. A physician was available as follows:

- for 53% of family physicians in Canada,*
- for a greater proportion of male (57%) than female (49%) practitioners ($P < .0001$),

- for a greater proportion of family physicians who practise in groups (55%) than in solo practitioners (48%) ($P < .0001$), and
- for a varying proportion of family physicians based upon their age, the primary patient population they served, and the province or territory where they practised (Figures 1 to 3).

By completing your 2007 NPS (sent to all physicians in Canada in January 2007—please check your mail and e-mail), you will provide current data to update these findings! If you would like the opportunity to develop and write a future Fast Facts using the 2004 NPS results, please contact **Sarah Scott**, National Physician Survey and Janus Project Coordinator at 800 387-6197, extension 289, or sks@cfpc.ca.



*The analysis above is based on the 62% of family physician respondents ($n=6794$) who indicated that they offered patient care and that their main patient care setting was a private office or clinic. Compared with family physicians who did not indicate that a physician was available to care for their patients outside usual office hours, those with a physician available were less likely to indicate that they also provided instructions for their patients to go to an emergency department (47% vs 69%) or that they provided instructions for their patients to go to a walk-in clinic or after-hours clinic (28% vs 48%).

Figure 1. Proportion of family physicians indicating that a physician was available to care for their patients outside usual office hours, by physician age

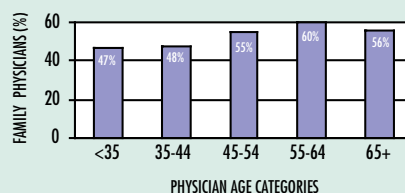


Figure 2. Proportion of family physicians indicating that a physician was available to care for their patients outside usual office hours, by primary patient population served

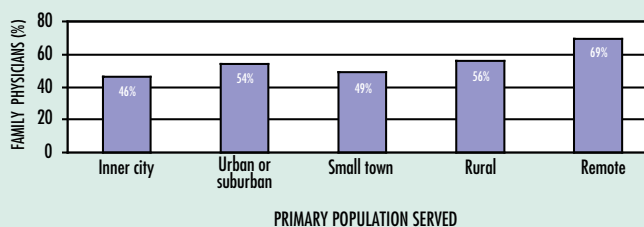


Figure 3. Proportion of family physicians indicating that a physician was available to care for their patients outside usual office hours, by province or territory where physician practised

